

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 RABAT 03150 01 OF 02 301010Z
ACTION INR-10

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AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE
USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 3150

EO 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: XA CU UR MPOL
SUBJECT: MOROCCAN VIEW OF SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF STATE 134913

1. HOST GOVERNMENT PERCEPTIONS - ALONG WITH ITS CLOSE
MIDDLE EAST FRIENDS SUCH AS EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN AND
SUDAN, THE GOM IS A STRONG PROPONENT OF THE THEORY THAT
THE SOVIETS, AIDED AND ABETTED BY RADICAL CLIENTS AND
SUBCLIENTS, ENTERTAIN GRAND DESIGNS IN AFRICA AND ARE
RELENTLESSLY ON THE MOVE TO REALIZE THEM. THESE DESIGNS ARE
TO DESTABILIZE THE CONTINENT BY WEAKENING PRO-WESTERN,
MODERATE NATIONS AND STRENGTHENING RADICAL REGIMES WITH A
VIEW, AT LEAST IN PART, TOWARDS DENYING WESTERN EUROPEANS
ACCESS TO KEY RAW MATERIALS. IN THE CLIENT CATEGORY, THE

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PAGE 02 RABAT 03150 01 OF 02 301010Z

GOM SEES THE CUBANS, ALGERIA, LIBYA, ETHIOPIA, ANGOLA,
AND MOST OF THE OTHER FORMER PORTUGUESE COLONIES. SUB-
CLIENTS -- UNDER THE SWAY OF ONE OF THE AFOREMENTIONED --
WOULD INCLUDE THE POLISARIO. THE MOROCCANS CONSIDER THAT
THE SOVIETS MAINTAIN CONTROL BY A COMBINATION OF DISCIPLINED
FOLLOWERS IN EACH COUNTRY, ACTUAL SOVIET (AND CUBAN)
PRESENCE, AND CAREFULLY MANIPULATED MILITARY AND ECONOMIC

ASSISTANCE.

2. VIEW OF ATTENDANT PROBLEMS - THE GOM BELIEVES THE SOVIETS ARE PURSUING CLASSICAL OBJECTIVES: SEEKING INFLUENCE OVER COUNTRIES WHICH, FOR GEOGRAPHICAL AND/OR ECONOMIC REASONS, WILL GIVE THEM "CONTROL" OF THE CONTINENT AND ITS RESOURCES. (THE MOROCCAN JUSTIFICATION OF LAST YEAR'S SHABA INTERVENTION IS ILLUSTRATIVE: MINERAL-RICH ZAIRE IS LOCATED IN THE HEART OF THE CONTINENT. IT TOUCHES ON EIGHT NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH IN MOROCCAN EYES BEING THE SUDAN. LATTER IS KEY TO STABILITY IN NORTHEAST AFRICA AND TO THE SECURITY OF EGYPT (NILE HEADWATERS), SAUDI ARABIA AND WESTERN ACCESS TO OIL.) KING HASSAN HAS PERSONALLY ELABORATED SUCH GEOPOLITICAL THEMES IN NUMEROUS CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR AND HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS. IN NORTHWEST AFRICA, MOROCCANS SEE THE ALGERIANS SERVING SOVIET DESIGNS BY SEEKING TO CREATE (1) INSTABILITY FOR THE PRO-WESTERN MONARCHY, (2) A RADICAL POLISARIO STATE ON THE ATLANTIC, AND (3) ANOTHER CLIENT STATE IN NEIGHBORING MAURITANIA. IN LIBYA, ANOTHER OBJECT OF MOROCCAN PHOBIA, THE GOM SEES A NAIVE AND ERRATIC QADHAFI BEING USED AS A BASE AND SUPPLY DEPOT, INCLUDING HIGHLY-SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT FOR SOVIET-BACKED MILITARY ADVENTURES ON THE CONTINENT. OTHER SOVIET-INSPIRED THREATS ARE PERCEIVED IN CHAD, THE HORN, AND SOUTHERN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 RABAT 03150 01 OF 02 301010Z

AFRICA, ALTHOUGH MOROCCO'S PRIDE IN ITS CREDENTIALS ON RECIST REGIMES INDUCES SOME AMBIVALENCE IN ITS VIEW OF THE LAST NAMED REGION.

3. PRESCRIPTION FOR ACTION - THE GOM HAS BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER U.S. FAILURES TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO TROUBLE ON THE CONTINENT BEGINNING WITH THE 1975 ANGOLA DEBACLE. MOROCCANS MAKE THE POINT THAT ONLY THE U.S. HAS THE RESOURCES TO COUNTER SOVIET OBJECTIVES. AS A STOPGAP, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT, SOMETIMES IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH MODERATE AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STATES AND FRANCE, IN TAKING CONCRETE MEASURES. THE MOROCCANS COOPERATED IN AN ABORTIVE MOVE TO REMOVE THE RADICAL BENIN REGIME, ARE QUIETLY SUPPORTING UNITA AND THE ELF, AND WOULD PROBABLY HAVE LIKED TO SUPPORT SOMALIA IN OGADEN, BUT FOR ITS COMMITMENTS IN THE SAHARA. AND, OF COURSE, THEY SENT TROOPS LAST YEAR TO SHABA AND MAY, ALONG WITH OTHER AFRICANS, AGAIN SEND A SIGNIFICANT CONTINGENT.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 3150

4. ALWAYS IN THE BACKGROUND HAS BEEN THE GOM DESIRE NOT TO OFFEND ANYONE UNNECESSARILY FOR FEAR OF LOSING DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT ON THE ALL-IMPORTANT SAHARA ISSUE. AS THE OPPOSING LINEUPS ON THAT QUESTION HAVE STABILIZED, HOWEVER, AND AS GOM CONTROL OVER THE TERRITORY HAS SOLIDIFIED, THE MOROCCANS HAVE BEEN MORE WILLING TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED. THUS, WHILE THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA HAVE IN THE PAST YEAR COME IN FOR MORE DIRECT CRITICISM FOR THEIR ACTIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF AFRICA, THIS HAS NOT PREVENTED THE GOM FROM PLAYING A DIFFERENT HAND AS CONCERNS THESE TWO NATIONS ON THE SAHARA QUESTION. GOM DIPLOMACY HAS, WITH SOME DEGREE OF SUCCESS, MANAGED TO INDUCE THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS (AND THE LIBYANS AS WELL) TO MAINTAIN A PUBLIC DISTANCE FROM THE ALGERIAN POSITION. THE RECENT SIGNINGS OF THE MESKALA PHOSPHATE ACCORDS AND OF A FISHING AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS HIGH-SECRET

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PAGE 02 RABAT 03150 02 OF 02 301015Z

LIGHT THIS TACTIC. WITH THE CUBANS, THE GOM HAS BEEN EQUALLY SOLICITOUS, STRESSING THE POSITIVE INCLUDING

PUBLICLY CITING CUBAN "ASSURANCES" THAT THEY WERE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUPPORT OF THE POLISARIO.

5. SOVIETS AND CUBANS A DIVISIVE ISSUE IN AFRICA?

ALTHOUGH THE GOM HAS IN ITS DECLARATIONS SOUGHT TO USE THE SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE ON THE CONTINENT TO "UNIFY" AFRICANS, THE MOROCCANS CLEARLY SEE THE AFRICAN LINEUP AS ALREADY DIVIDED ALONG COLD WAR LINES AND ARE REALLY ADDRESSING THE AFRICAN MODERATES WHEN THEY CALL FOR UNITY AGAINST OUTSIDE AGGRESSION. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME EXCEPTIONS TO THE STEROTYPE, HOWEVER, WHICH THEY HAVE NOT HESITATED TO EXPLOIT WHEN ABLE. THUS, "PROGRESSIVE" GUINEA HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COURTED WHEN THE OCCASION PRESENTED ITSELF.

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